THE ULTIMATES 2

EWING • FOREMAN • BROWN

MARVEL

#5

The ultimate team has come together to solve the ultimate problems. Blue Marvel. Spectrum. Black Panther. Captain Marvel. America Chavez. They are...

THE ULTIMATES 2

I AM THE *NEVER QUEEN*, SHE WHO IS *ALL POSSIBILITY*. I AM WHAT *MIGHT BE*, FOREVER OUTSIDE WHAT *IS*. AND FROM THERE, I SEE *ALL*.

FIRST THERE WERE *THE ULTIMATES*-- FORMED BY CAROL DANVERS TO SOLVE COSMIC PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY *BECAME* PROBLEMS. THE *IMPOSSIBLE* WAS WHERE THEY STARTED--

--BY SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF *GALACTUS*, THE WORLD-EATER. TOGETHER, THEY *CURED* HIS HUNGER, EVOLVING HIM INTO HIS *TRUE ROLE* AS *LIFEBRINGER*.

ON A LATER MISSION, GALACTUS-- AND THE ULTIMATES-- DISCOVERED THAT ETERNITY, HE WHO IS THE MULTIVERSE, WAS IN CHAINS.

THE ULTIMATES *DISBANDED*--THEN *RE-FORMED*, AGAINST THE WISHES OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, TO SOLVE THIS NEW MYSTERY AS A *SECRET TEAM*.

HOWEVER, THEY WERE BEING MONITORED BY A *SECOND* GROUP--THE *TROUBLESHOOTERS*-- WHO TRACKED THEM DOWN AND ENGAGED IN *COMBAT*--

--DURING WHICH *ONE* OF THEIR MEMBERS, *RODSTVOW*, REVEALED HIMSELF AS SOMETHING *MONSTROUS*... WITH *DARK* INTENTIONS FOR THE COSMOS.

MEANWHILE, ON THE *HIGHER* PLANES, THE ASPECTS OF REALITY ARE AT *WAR*.

ON HEARING THE *LIVING TRIBUNAL'S* JUDGMENT THAT ALL THINGS WERE NOW *POSSIBLE*, CHAOS AND ORDER *MURDERED HIM*--

--THEN MERGED INTO THEIR *OWN* LAW, SELF-NAMED *LOGOS*, *EXECUTED* THE GODLIKE *CELESTIALS*--

--AND *RESTORED* GALACTUS' HUNGER, MORE *POTENT* THAN EVER BEFORE.

SOMETHING IS *BEHIND* ALL THIS. *SOMETHING* CHAINED ETERNITY. *SOMETHING* CORRUPTED *ORDER* AND SET *RODSTVOW* LOOSE ON EARTH.

I FEAR SOON WE WILL KNOW *WHAT*...

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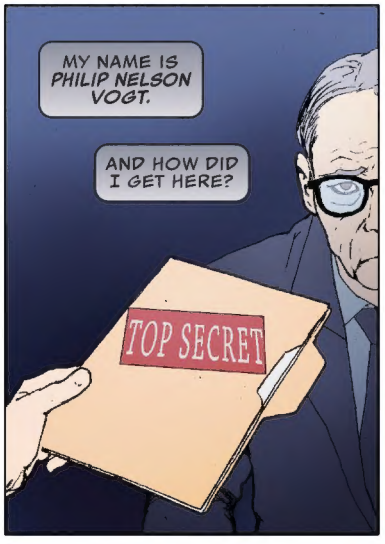
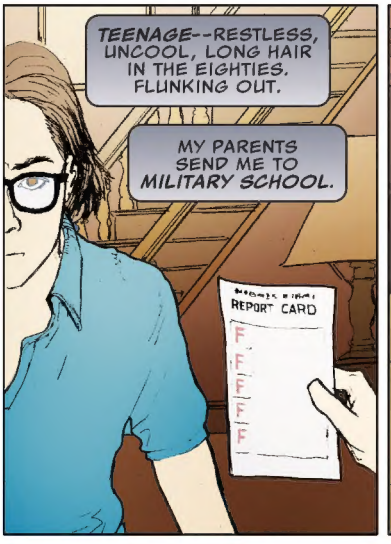
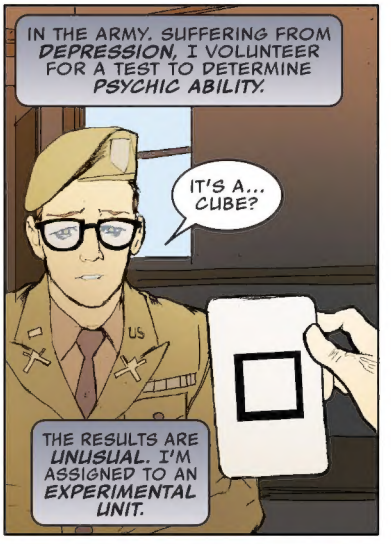




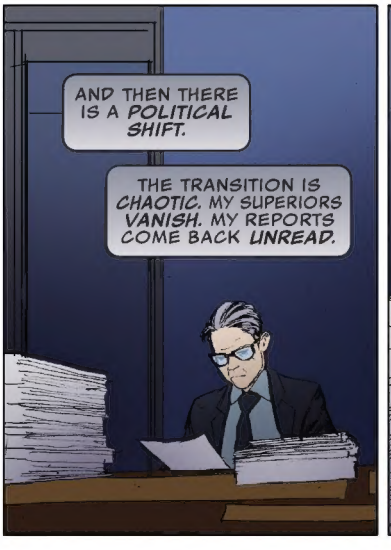

IN THE ARMY. SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION, I VOLUNTEER FOR A TEST TO DETERMINE PSYCHIC ABILITY.
IT'S A... CUBE?
US
THE RESULTS ARE UNUSUAL. I'M ASSIGNED TO AN EXPERIMENTAL UNIT.

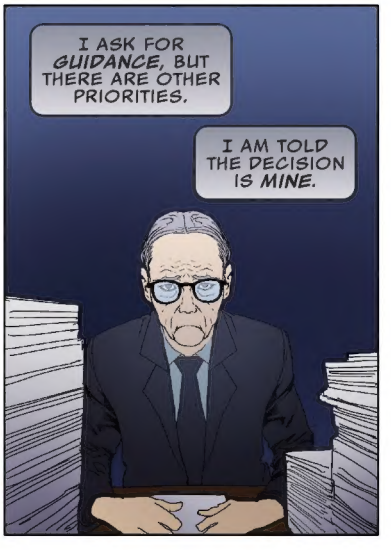
THE FIRST ETERNITY BATTALION. THE NAME SEEMS OMINOUS, BUT THE WORK FEELS RIGHT. IMPORTANT.
I MAKE FRIENDS WITH A MAN NAMED JAMES TENSEN. I FINALLY BELONG.

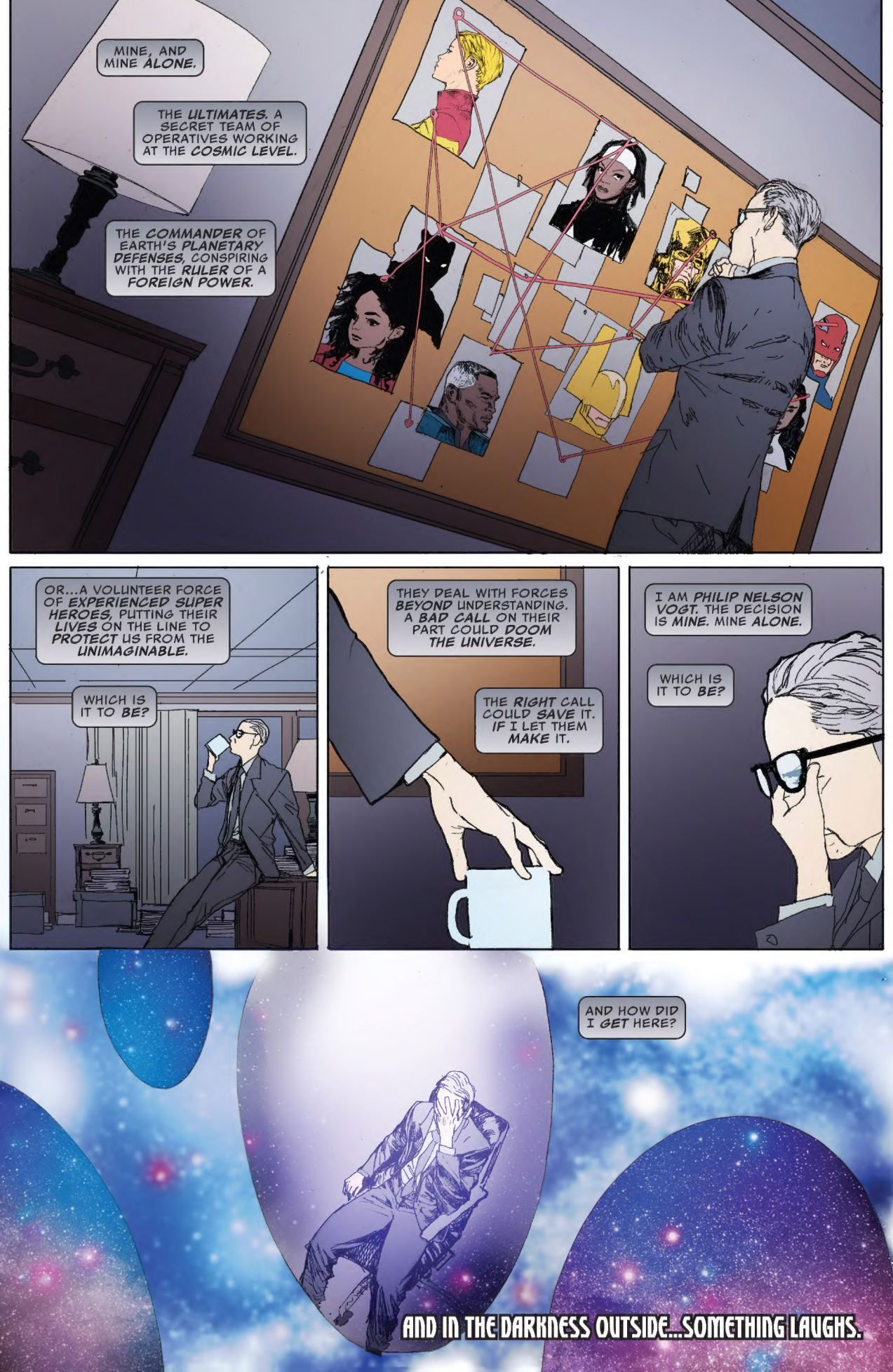
ONE DAY, DURING A SEEMINGLY ROUTINE DEPLOYMENT IN TRANSIA

SOMETHING

HAPPENS






MINE, AND MINE ALONE.
THE ULTIMATES. A SECRET TEAM OF OPERATIVES WORKING AT THE COSMIC LEVEL.
THE COMMANDER OF EARTH'S PLANETARY DEFENSES, CONSPIRING WITH THE RULER OF A FOREIGN POWER.
OR...A VOLUNTEER FORCE OF EXPERIENCED SUPER HEROES, PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO PROTECT US FROM THE UNIMAGINABLE.
WHICH IS IT TO BE?
THEY DEAL WITH FORCES BEYOND UNDERSTANDING. A BAD CALL ON THEIR PART COULD DOOM THE UNIVERSE.
THE RIGHT CALL COULD SAVE IT. IF I LET THEM MAKE IT.
I AM PHILIP NELSON VOGT. THE DECISION IS MINE. MINE ALONE.
WHICH IS IT TO BE?
AND HOW DID I GET HERE?
AND IN THE DARKNESS OUTSIDE...SOMETHING LAUGHS.

AT THE DEAD CELESTIALS.
AT THE CORPSE OF COSMIC JUSTICE.
AT LIFE CORRUPTED INTO DEATH.
IT LAUGHS.
AND IT WILLS ITS HELPERS ON.
I HEAR YOU.
WE WILL GO BACK...

"...BACK TO A *BETTER* TIME..."

K-KUH.

COMING BACK.

TAA II.
WORLD-SHIP OF GALACTUS.
HOME BASE OF THE ULTIMATES.

IT'S *COMING* BACK...

TUH-TAKING EVERYTHING BACK *INTO* IT...*TAKING* EVERYTHING...

THE *ONE*... THE ONE WHO IS *ONE*...

CONNER SIMS.
CODENAME: "ANTI-MAN."
HERALD OF THE LIFEBRINGER.
DYING ON THE FLOOR.

THE ULTIMATES VS. THE TROUBLESHOOTERS.
MAKING WAR AT THE END OF DAYS.

THE *JAILER*...

T'CHALLA OF WAKANDA VS.
KATHY LING.
"BLACK PANTHER" VS.
"CODENAME: SPITFIRE."

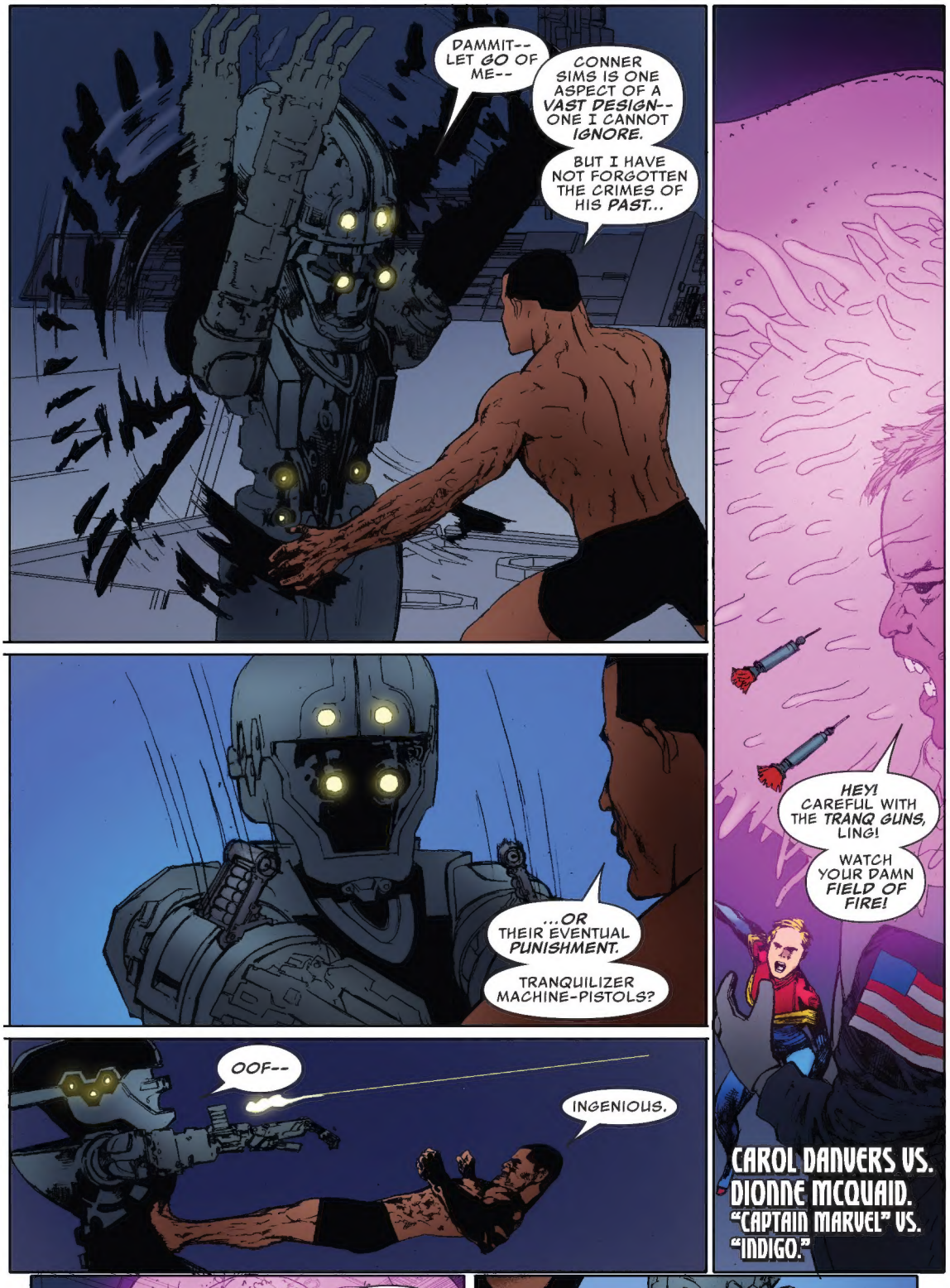
THIS IS *FOOLISHNESS*, LIEUTENANT LING.

SIMS MAY BE *DYING* WHILE WE FIGHT OVER *NOTHING*...

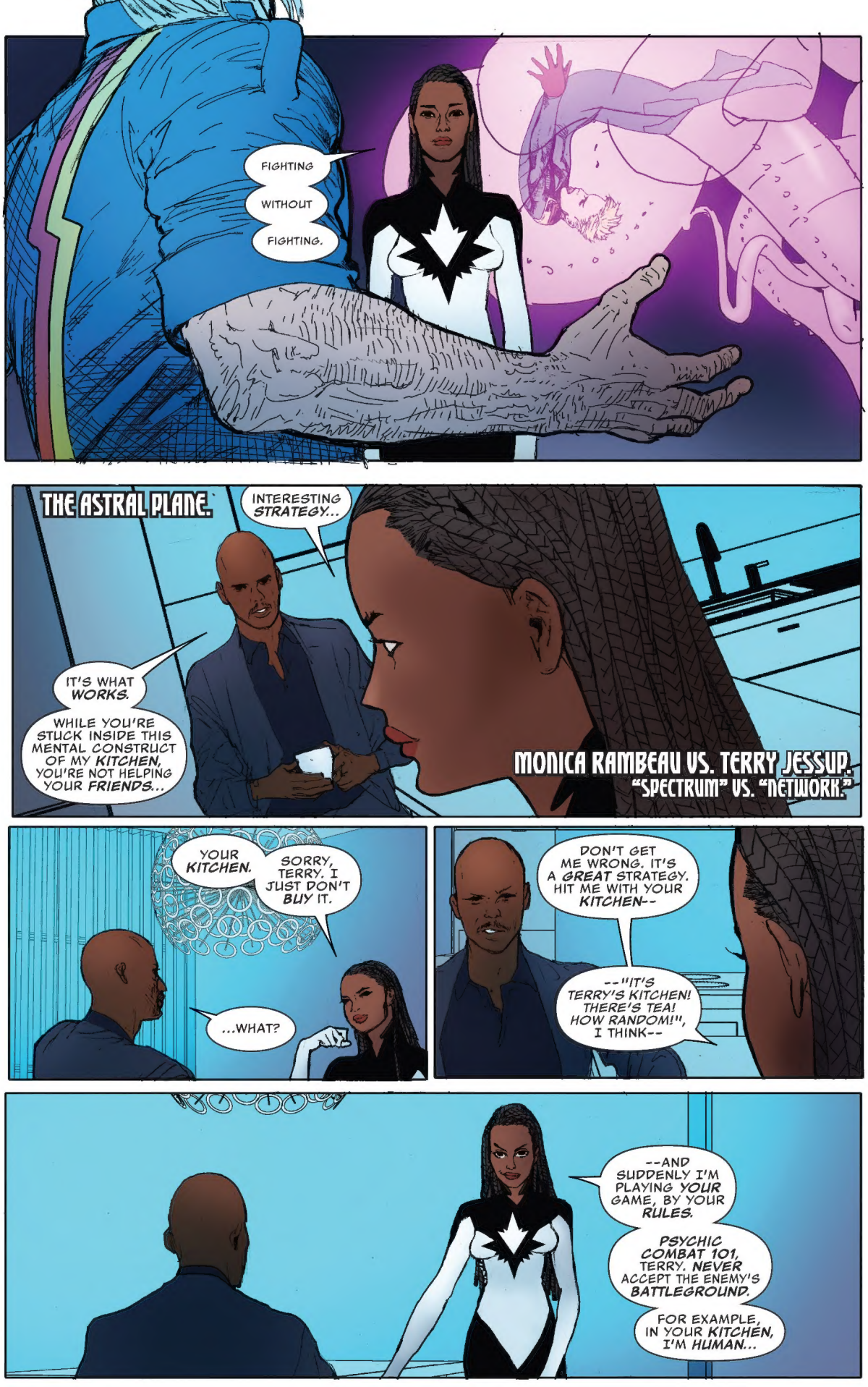
SO? THE MAN'S A *FUGITIVE*-- HE'S *KILLED* BEFORE--

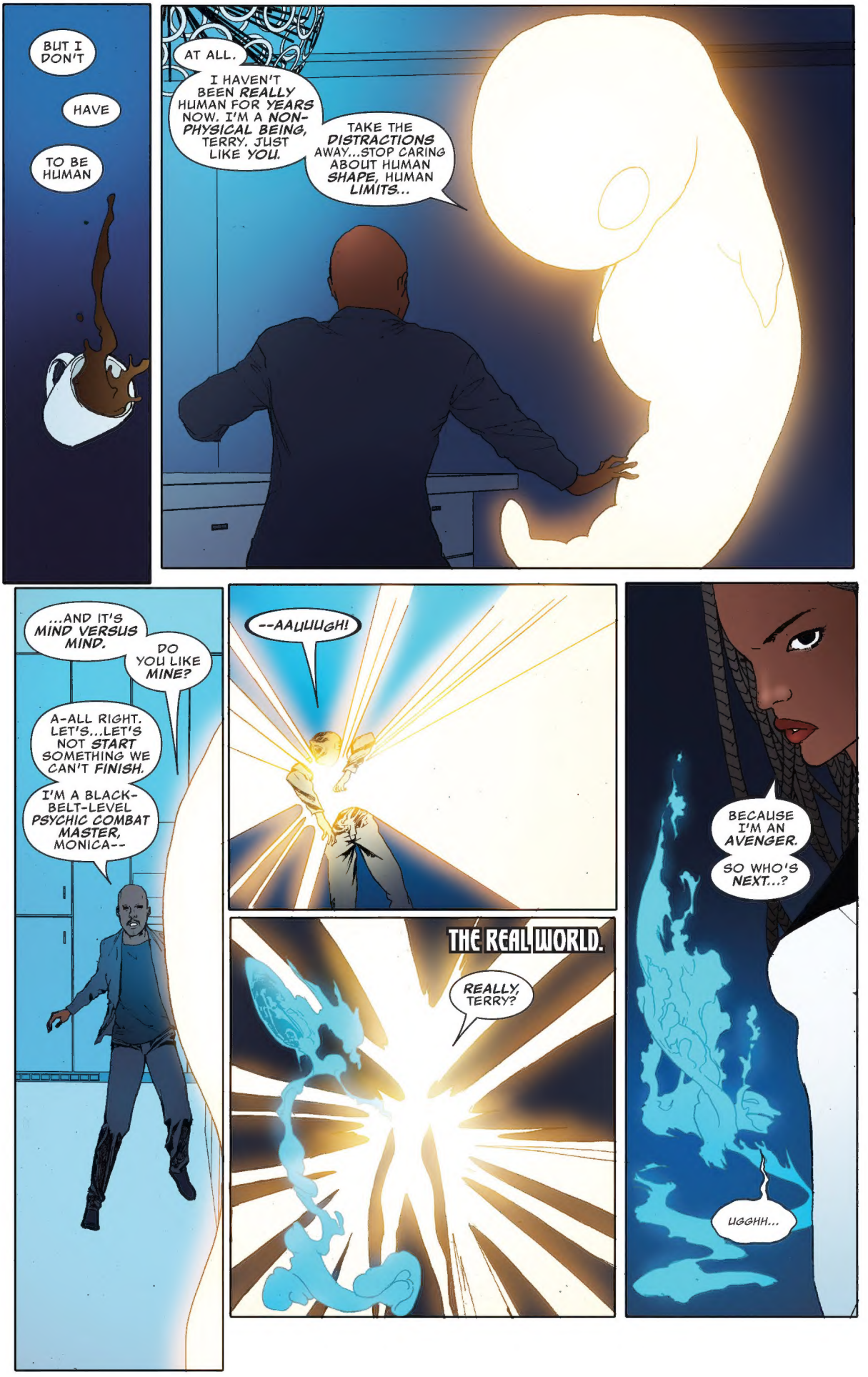
HOW ARE YOU THIS *STRONG*?

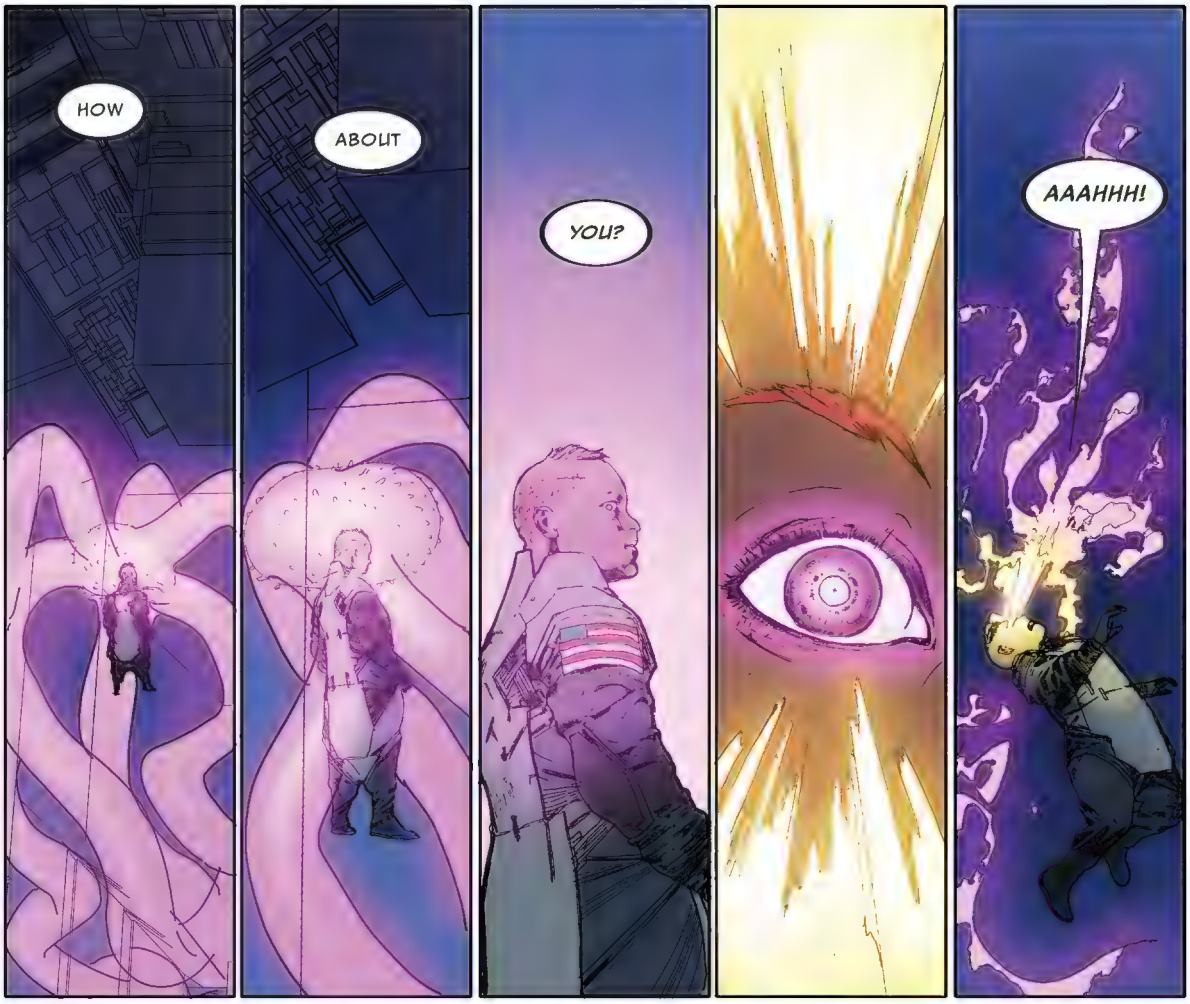
HERBAL SUPPLEMENTS.

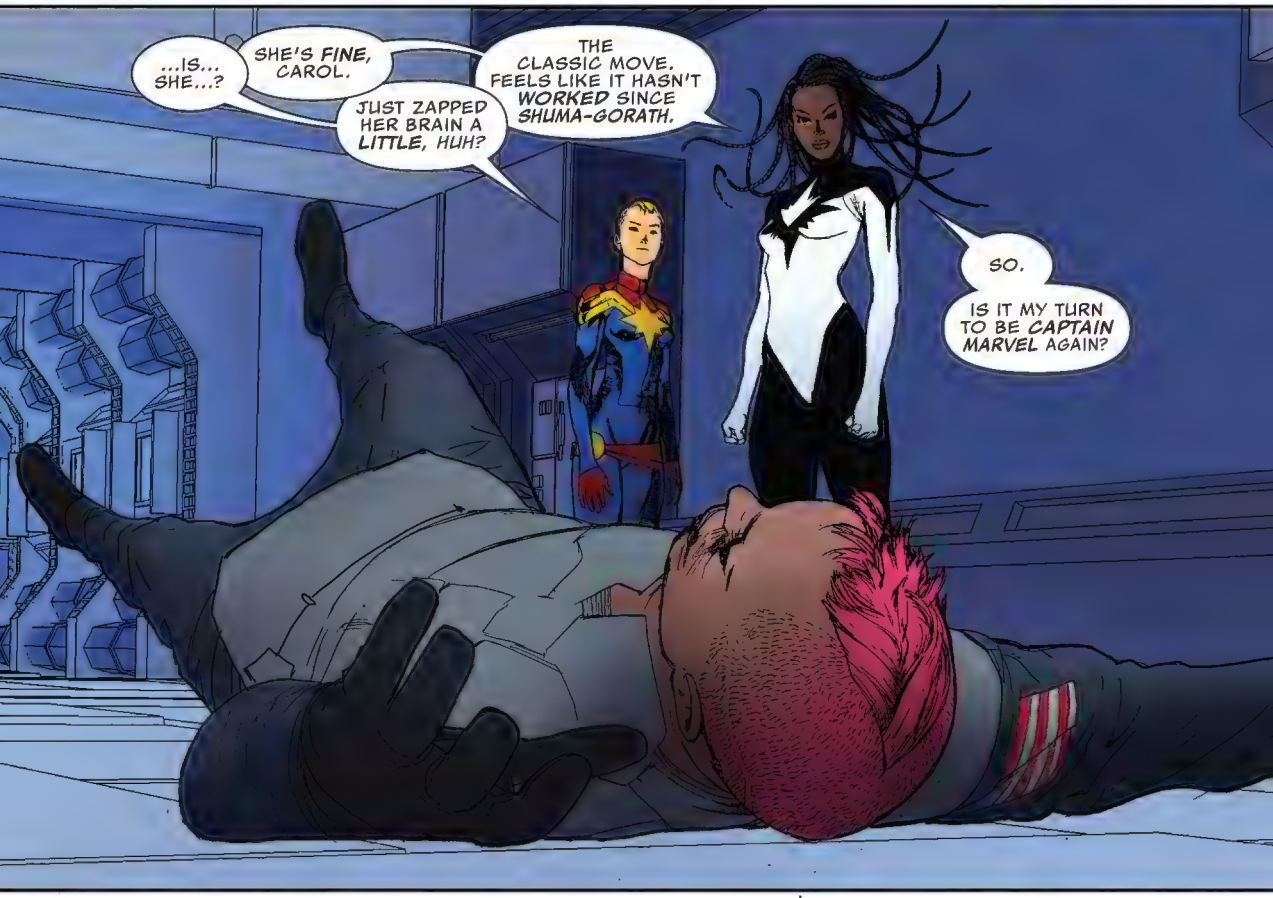

DAMMIT-- LET GO OF ME--
CONNER SIMS IS ONE ASPECT OF A VAST DESIGN-- ONE I CANNOT IGNORE.
BUT I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THE CRIMES OF HIS PAST...
...OR THEIR EVENTUAL PUNISHMENT.
TRANQUILIZER MACHINE-PISTOLS?
OOF--
INGENIOUS.
HEY! CAREFUL WITH THE TRANQ GUNS, LING!
WATCH YOUR DAMN FIELD OF FIRE!
CAROL DANVERS VS. DIONNE MCQUAID. "CAPTAIN MARVEL" VS. "INDIGO."
HONESTLY. MAKES ME SO MAD.
BAD NEWS FOR YOU.
UGGH!
GIVE IT UP, YOUR HIGHNESS! I TOLD YOU-- THE FIGHT'S OVER!
I'VE GOT TELEKINETIC ARMOR--YOU'VE GOT A SPEEDO--
YES.

AND NOW I *ALSO* HAVE AN *OPENING.*
THANK YOU.
T'TO!
UNNHH--
W-WHAT... DID YOU...?
I CALL IT *SHADOW COMBAT.*
MY *PERSONAL* FUSION OF *WAKANDAN* AND *K'UN-LUN* STYLES--PLUS A DASH OF *BRUCE LEE.*
YOUR ARMOR IS CONTROLLED VIA *TELEKINESIS.* A STRIKE TO YOUR *THIRD EYE* DISRUPTED YOUR *CHI*-- AND YOUR *CONTROL* OVER IT.
NOW THE FIGHT IS *OVER,* LIEUTENANT.
SHALL WE *TALK?*


FIGHTING
WITHOUT
FIGHTING.
THE ASTRAL PLANE.
INTERESTING STRATEGY...
IT'S WHAT WORKS.
WHILE YOU'RE STUCK INSIDE THIS MENTAL CONSTRUCT OF MY KITCHEN, YOU'RE NOT HELPING YOUR FRIENDS...
MONICA RAMBEAU VS. TERRY JESSUP.
"SPECTRUM" VS. "NETWORK."
YOUR KITCHEN.
SORRY, TERRY. I JUST DON'T BUY IT.
...WHAT?
DON'T GET ME WRONG. IT'S A GREAT STRATEGY. HIT ME WITH YOUR KITCHEN--
--"IT'S TERRY'S KITCHEN! THERE'S TEA! HOW RANDOM!", I THINK--
--AND SUDDENLY I'M PLAYING YOUR GAME, BY YOUR RULES.
PSYCHIC COMBAT 101, TERRY. NEVER ACCEPT THE ENEMY'S BATTLEGROUND.
FOR EXAMPLE, IN YOUR KITCHEN, I'M HUMAN...


BUT I DON'T
HAVE
TO BE HUMAN
AT ALL.
I HAVEN'T BEEN REALLY HUMAN FOR YEARS NOW. I'M A NON-PHYSICAL BEING, TERRY. JUST LIKE YOU.
TAKE THE DISTRACTIONS AWAY...STOP CARING ABOUT HUMAN SHAPE, HUMAN LIMITS...
...AND IT'S MIND VERSUS MIND.
DO YOU LIKE MINE?
A-ALL RIGHT. LET'S...LET'S NOT START SOMETHING WE CAN'T FINISH.
I'M A BLACK-BELT-LEVEL PSYCHIC COMBAT MASTER, MONICA--
--AAUUUGH!
THE REAL WORLD.
REALLY, TERRY?
BECAUSE I'M AN AVENGER.
SO WHO'S NEXT...?
UGGHH...

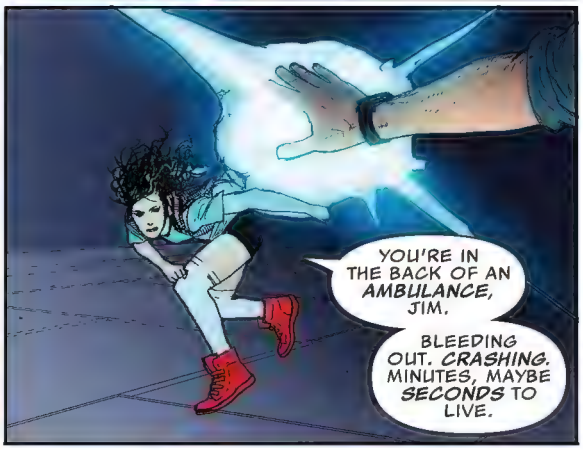

HOW
ABOUT
YOU?
AAAHHH!


...IS... SHE...?
SHE'S FINE, CAROL.
JUST ZAPPED HER BRAIN A LITTLE, HUH?
THE CLASSIC MOVE. FEELS LIKE IT HASN'T WORKED SINCE SHUMA-GORATH.
SO.
IS IT MY TURN TO BE CAPTAIN MARVEL AGAIN?

AMERICA CHAVEZ VS. JIM TENSEN.
AND THEN THERE WAS ONE.
GIVE IT UP, JIM.
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU. ANY OF YOU.
BUT WHEN YOU'RE MAKING DECISIONS ON THE COSMIC SCALE-- RISKING LIVES, MAYBE RISKING UNIVERSES--

--WITH NO OVERSIGHT--
UNNH--!

--WELL, I'VE GOT MY ORDERS.
NO OVERSIGHT?


YOU'RE IN THE BACK OF AN AMBULANCE, JIM.
BLEEDING OUT. CRASHING. MINUTES, MAYBE SECONDS TO LIVE.

IT'S THE PARAMEDIC'S JOB TO GET YOU STABLE. TO USE THEIR EXPERTISE TO KEEP YOU ALIVE.
THAT'S WHAT I DO. WHAT MY TEAM DOES.
SWORD TO SHIELD--

PARAMEDICS FOR THE MULTIVERSE.
OPERATIVE WORDS--"FOR THE MULTIVERSE."

YOU WANT OVERSIGHT?
WE WORK FOR ETERNITY, JIM.
WHO DO YOU WORK FOR?
AARRHH!
BECAUSE THE THREAT IS DEEPER THAN THE PIECE OF PAPER YOU GET YOUR ORDERS FROM.
THE SHIELD-- BROKE--
MAYBE YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IN IT ENOUGH.
I'VE MET YOU BEFORE, JIM. I'VE MET TENSENS--JIMS, JOHNS, JENNYS, YOU COME IN A LOT OF FLAVORS.
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE.
WARRIORS OF SPRING.
BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO WORSHIP WINTER. AND THE SNOW GETS DEEP.
YOU CAN LOSE YOUR WAY.
WHO DO YOU WORK FOR?
...
IT'S MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT...

YEAH.
IT ALWAYS IS.
IS...IS THAT...
ADAM BRASHEAR VS. SIMON RODSTVOW.
"BLUE MARVEL" VS. SOMETHING BEYOND NAMING.
HELLO, JAMES...
RODSTVOW...?
MAYBE IT CALLED ITSELF THAT. SOME PREDATORS ARE GOOD AT CAMOUFLAGE. THAT ONE FOOLED ALL OF US.
WHAT IT REALLY IS... WELL, I'VE GOT THEORIES.
BUT THERE'S ANOTHER QUESTION.
WHO SENT IT?
AND WHY?

ADAM!
HOLD ON-- LET ME TRANSFER SOME ENERGY--
HELD HIM OFF...AS LONG AS I COULD. COULDN'T... COULDN'T STOP HIM.
NOT IN THERE.
BUT NOW I'M HERE.
AND I THINK... I'VE GOT AN IDEA.
NO. NO MORE IDEAS. NO MORE SOLUTIONS.
THE PIECES ARE IN PLACE NOW. MY MASTER-- IN WHOM I WAS BORN AND WILL DIE--HAS WAITED NUMBERLESS AEONS FOR THIS ONE MOMENT.
YOU COULD HAVE STOPPED IT...BUT INSTEAD, YOU STOPPED EACH OTHER.
NOW THE NEW NORMAL HAS ARRIVED.
NOW IS COME THE END OF ALL THINGS.
SAYS YOU.
BRING IT ON.

EARTH.
PHILIP VOGT.
HOW DID I GET HERE?
AND WHAT DO I DO--
PHIL!
WHAT?
PHIL!
CAME THROUGH-- COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS--FASTEST WAY TO GET HERE FROM THERE--
HAD TO TELL YOU-- WARN YOU-- YOU NEED TO SEE--
TERRY, SLOW DOWN-- WHAT ARE YOU--
--UUHHH!
YOU NEED TO SEE WHAT I SAW!
LOOK AT IT, PHIL!
WHAT DO WE DO?
WHAT DO WE DO TO STOP THAT?
DEAR LORD...
MY DECISION.

MINE ALONE.

GOD HELP US ALL.

NOTHING CAN HELP YOU NOW.

YOUR OWN SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN CORRUPTED. TURNED AGAINST YOU.

THEY WILL DEVOUR YOU FROM THE INSIDE OUT.

AND I WILL ABSORB WHAT SCRAPS ARE LEFT OF YOU, ETERNITY.

AND ALL WILL BE AS IT WAS, LONG AGO.

BEFORE YOUR FOUL KIND.

BEFORE THE MULTIVERSES.

EIGHTH AND SEVENTH... AND SIXTH...AND FIFTH...AND BACK AND BACK...

DYING AND BEING BORN, OVER AND OVER. LIKE FILTHY LITTLE ORGANISMS.

WE WILL RETURN TO A SANER TIME. WHEN THERE WAS BUT ONE COSMOS.

ONE UNIVERSE. ONE REALITY. ONE TOTALITY.

WHEN THERE WAS ONLY *I*.

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS THE ULTIMATES² IN...

SKYEATHER

AL EWING
WRITER

TRAVEL FOREMAN
ARTIST

DAN BROWN
COLOR ARTIST

VC'S JOE SABINO
LETTERER

CHRISTIAN WARD
COVER ARTIST

ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PRESIDENT

ALAN FINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

THE ULTI-MAILS

WRITE TO US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM (MARK "OKAY TO PRINT")

Greetings, Ulti-Mates! Al Ewing here, ready to answer your Ulti-Mails as always--mark 'em OKAY TO PRINT and send 'em off to mheroes@marvel.com, and we'll print the best! Let's dive right into the latest batch…

After reading THE ULTIMATES, I thought it would be fun to see Jim Tensen run into Karnak. Their conflicting philosophies could make for an interesting interaction. With Ewing doing ULTIMATES and the main INHUMANS title it seems like would be possible now.

Levintwo

Hi Levintwo! I'm not sure ROYALS is any more of a main title than SECRET WARRIORS or BLACK BOLT, but I agree a fight between Karnak and Tensen might be interesting to see. As we saw this issue, Tensen's psychic shield can be broken if the man behind it has doubts, so Karnak could win the battle with some well-chosen words. Or would Tensen's more cuddly outlook turn Big K away from the dark side? Something to ponder…

Hello, team!

Congratulations on the book. It's been very interesting to read. I must point out, however, something that couldn't have happened, and that is Chaos and Order killing the Living Tribunal. They are both stations below him, and so is their power. Not to mention, with his mastery over time, he should have known Chaos and Order would try to attack him, just like the Living Tribunal knew Adam Warlock would willingly disperse the Infinity Gems in the amazing WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH #1!

And please bring back Stardust, he is Galacus' most faithful servant!

Regards,
Christian Hernandez

Hi, Christian! You're right, Chaos and Order certainly couldn't have killed the Tribunal--in the previous multiverse. But this is a new Tribunal for a new multiverse, and according to his own ruling, things are in flux and a new cosmic hierarchy is forming--which means there's never been a better time for lower-grade cosmic entities like Order and Chaos to go for the top spot. And go they did! The question is, is this the new normal, or a temporary blip?

My progenitor (sire?) may be chained. No matter the outcome of his(?) imprisonment, a portion of his essence remains to become that which is/was/and always will be. What better place to experience my growing pains than the planet with the most pivotal points in all existence? Attached is a JPEG of my first appearance at San Diego Comic-Con 2016.

R. Williams
Sask., Canada

Hi, R! Nice cosmic starfield you've got going there--Eternity would be proud! As for the outcome of his current predicament… well, things seem to be coming to a head. What happens now…?

Hey Al!

THE ULTIMATES is by far the most gripping of the current Marvel titles, to me at least. Perhaps this is because it seems you are shaping a map of things to come in the post-SECRET WARS multiverse on a cosmic level. Thanos shrugs Lady Death for "Nothing," we've seen Order and Chaos, Eternity is chained by a--so far--anonymous jailer, and hippie-Galactus is building a team of heralds to ensure "everything lives." Great stuff!

Which leads me to two questions. First off, in ULTIMATES² Issue #1, you introduce Eternity as a representation of the multiverse and "everything that is known." It is my understanding that there is a representation of Eternity in each individual universe within the overall multiverse, just as each universe is host to individual iterations of their respective cosmic entities. Has this changed after the events of Secret Wars? To clarify: is this chained Eternity a personification of space-time in the Earth-616 universe specifically, or does this Eternity represent the multiverse as a whole, as I've come to understand from the first pages of that issue?

My second question: If this threat is multiversal and not only universal, can we expect to see some other cosmic entities from across the multiverse come to aid Eternity? Adam Warlock as the Living Tribunal for example, or maybe even The One Above All (Or Above-All-Others now, I guess)? If the entire Multiverse is in chains, surely this would draw the attention of the remaining "Cosmic Compass"--Oblivion, Infinity, Death? You get my gist. ULTIMATES seems like the perfect book to explore these entities consistently and establish a clearer picture of how the Multiverse functions and who its key players are.

Can't wait to see what Galactus and Conner Sims have in store for the Ultimates! Please keep up the great work!

Mohammed Alshoaiby

Thanks for the kind words, Mohammed! To answer your first question--each universe-level Eternity is its own being, but also a piece of the larger multiverse-level Eternity, just as all of you is encoded in every cell of your DNA. Multiverse-level Eternity is the one who is chained--as we saw in early issues, as well as issues of other mags, the universe-level Eternity can appear unchained, if he wishes.

As for the other cosmic super-biggies--well, we've seen what Order and Chaos have been up to. Infinity is the other side of Eternity, as I recall, so presumably she's got a vested interest. As for Death and Oblivion… we might be seeing more of them as things ramp up to a higher level. Alternately, they may be keeping well out of it. After all, it's not like their jobs are threatened--there'll be plenty of death and oblivion in the coming cosmic conflagration…

And that's all for this month's letters--we'll be printing more next month! Until then, be kind, stay safe and keep sending those ulti-mails, Ulti-mates!

Al

ADDITIONAL READING:

TO FIND OUT WHAT AMERICA DOES WHEN SHE'S NOT LEADING THE ULTIMATES, CHECK OUT *AMERICA #1*. AND TO FIND OUT WHAT CAPTAIN MARVEL'S BEEN UP TO WHEN SHE'S NOT RILING THE TROUBLESHOOTERS, CHECK OUT *MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #1*. BOTH ARE AVAILABLE DIGITALLY AT COMICSTORE.MARVEL.COM AND FROM YOUR LOCAL RETAILER.

NEXT:
ULTIMATES² #6